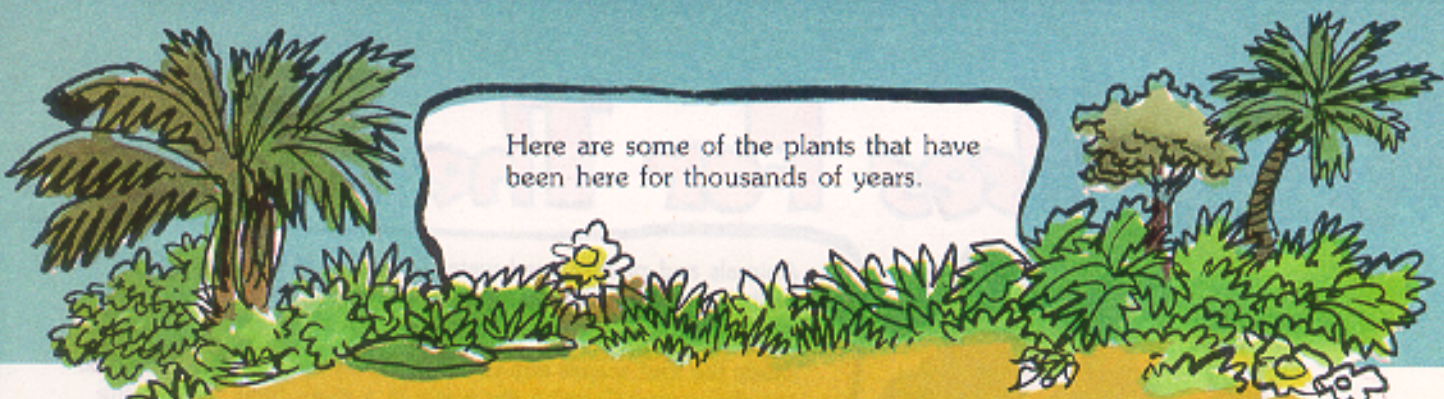


Here's a map of South Florida. Can you find the area where you live on this map?

The Everglades, where I live, are at the tip of the map. Lots of other animals live there too, along with many, many plants.

Did you know that there are thousands of kinds of plants that grow in our area? I'm not talking about tomatoes or oranges or strawberries. Those are things people plant. I'm talking about sawgrass and waterlilies and mangrove trees — plants that grew here long before people came.

All plants are important to the **environment**. Plants help to make the water cleaner. Plants also make the **oxygen** that we all breathe.



Here are some of the plants that have been here for thousands of years.

TREES

Live oaks
Mangroves
Pines
Palms
Magnolias

WATER PLANTS

Bullrushes
Cattails
Waterlilies

GRASSES

Needlegrass
Saw grass
Wire cordgrass

BUSHES

Gallberries
Palmettos
Wax Myrtle
Willows

And all these different kinds of plants are important to the animals that live here. Some plants give food to us animals that live in the fields and wetlands. Some plants give us places to hide. And some plants give us building materials and places for nests.

What kinds of animals am I talking about? Well, not just us alligators, but fish and birds and even bears and panthers.

Here's a list of some of the animals that live in South Florida. How many of them have you seen?



Alligators
Armadillos
Bears
Bobcats
Cranes
Deer
Eagles
Fish

Foxes
Frogs
Hawks
Herons
Lizards
Mink
Otters
Opossums

Rabbits
Raccoons
Wood Storks
Snakes
Sparrows
Squirrels
Tortoises
Turtles

Do you know why I'm talking about plants and animals in a book about water? Well, like I said before, all of us creatures need water and plants to live — just like people!

